



*The 2020 Member Display will
celebrate decoys by Elmer Crowell*

Midwest Decoy Collectors Association NEWSLETTER

Winter 2020



MOVIN' ON UP!

It's a new year and we've got a whole new location for the 55th North American Vintage Decoy & Sporting Collectibles Show! For the first time, the annual show will take place at The Westin Lombard in Lombard, IL, less than 20 miles east of St. Charles, our home for the past 35 years. Sporting collectibles enthusiasts from all over North America will gather May 5-9, 2020 at this new venue that has it all—large, well-lit rooms for room-to-room trading, and state of the art exhibit space for the Guyette & Deeter auction and our tabled dealer show.

In addition, The Westin location features two great on-site restaurants, along with a variety of other dining choices in the Yorktown Center premium shopping mall right across the street from the hotel. Plus a large indoor pool, complete fitness studio, and much more. You'll find more details in the Show Preview section of this newsletter.

The 2020 Show is stacking up to be one to remember not only for the exciting new venue but for the collecting, networking and educational opportunities that abound. As the largest show of its kind anywhere, the show will offer collectors almost limitless choices of items to add to their collections. At the same time, there will be numerous opportunities to visit with and learn from collectors with similar interests, and to view special items in various displays that come from some of the finest collections in America. Check out the Show Preview here to see all of the great events that are planned.

In addition to a look at the 2020 Show, this newsletter is full of other stories of interest that we hope you will enjoy.

North American Vintage Decoy & Sporting Collectibles Show
The Westin Lombard • Lombard, Illinois
May 5-9, 2020

Discover • Preserve • Celebrate

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WHO WE ARE

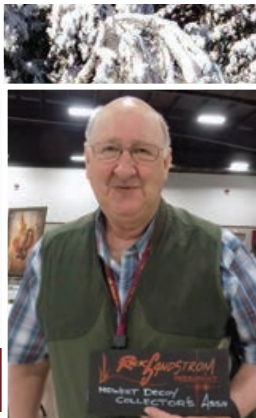
The **Midwest Decoy Collectors Association** is a nonprofit, educational organization incorporated under the laws of the State of Illinois. It invites membership to all persons. The purpose of Midwest Decoy Collectors is to foster the hobby of decoy collecting by attracting new collectors, seeking out and preserving old decoys, gathering data about carvers and their methods, and holding an annual show for decoy collectors and carvers.

OUR HISTORY

The **Midwest Decoy Collectors Association** was started in 1966 by a small group of dedicated decoy collectors as a gathering in Ottawa, Illinois to reconnect, share stories and trade decoys. Since then, the Club has grown to nearly 800 enthusiasts from all over North America and from all walks of life. They write books on collecting, manage auction companies, publish collector magazines, carve world class decoys, calls and collectibles, provide appraisal services, and form a core network of knowledge on sporting collectibles and their history. That humble gathering of collectors in 1966 has grown to become the **North American Vintage Decoy and Sporting Collectibles Show** – the largest show of its kind. The annual show features room-to-room trading, a tabled show and a major decoy auction in addition to a variety of networking events and educational activities including seminars, displays and carving demonstrations.

DISPLAY ADVERTISING is now being accepted in select issues of the MDCA newsletter. Contact Jeff Seregny at jseregny@gmail.com or 586-530-6586 for rates and availability.

www.midwestdecoy.org



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Simply put, it built quickly into a real shitstorm. First, we heard that Pheasant Run had laid off a large part of their staff. Next, we learned that the resort was being put up for auction on February 1st. Then we got official word that they couldn't honor our contract. Yikes! It was late November. And I was headed to Rochester to meet with my Mayo team.

Pheasant Run was worn out. We all knew it and the plans to renovate didn't happen. We have made many loyal friends like Jim the bellman and others who will always have a special place in our hearts for their loyalty and support. But it was obviously time to move on.

So now what? I called Jon Deeter and we both hit the road looking for a solution, with the help of Matt Downs and his wife who identified some viable options. Jon and I agreed on our first choice...if we could just get to a contract that worked for all of us.

The Westin Lombard team stepped right up and in short order we had a new home with a long term growth plan. I met with the General Manager and his entire team multiple times, and I couldn't be more pleased. It is the wonderful upgrade that we deserve. It is a destination hotel in a vibrant area that I'm sure you will enjoy. Both the fish restaurant and Italian steakhouse on property are noteworthy.

There is a tremendous amount of thought going into our event to make sure we leverage all the capability

of this new location. Networking, learning and growth opportunities are in focus.

We will maintain our room-to-room social environment and add some mixer events. All rooms are located in the same building and we have the space to accommodate new attendees. The two ballrooms for the auction and the show are wonderful upgrades with carpeting and great lighting. The auction ballroom location has a veranda that overlooks the lake, large windows and excellent light control. The member displays will delight as we are able to view the terrific work of Crowell and Peterson. The supporting seminars should not be missed. Our call maker friends have better facilities for their plans and space to expand the fun.

We are working hard to communicate with over 400 contacts made through January. The level of excitement is easy to feel from the conversations and the response has been both wonderful and humbling.

Please pay your dues, make your plans to attend and make your reservations for your rooms and tables.

I would be remiss if I didn't thank my wife Liz for being such a rock and reminding me of all the wonderful friends we have made throughout the decoy network. Thank you all for your kind support.

Remember this show demands the best. Bring it and it finds a new home!

Happy Collecting.

Rick

All Smiles at the 2019 Show



Member News



Membership Continues Strong

The MDCA has remained vital and strong, while many other collecting organizations have experienced declines. At year-end our roster was on par with the previous year at nearly 760 members. They come from all over North America and represent a broad range of collecting interests — from decoys to sporting art and everything in between. Our membership includes dealers, collectors, auctioneers, magazine publishers, authors, restorers and more. There just isn't a sporting collectibles organization anywhere that provides its members with the breadth of networking and collecting opportunities as the MDCA.

Our association is proud to be hosting what will be our 55th annual North American Vintage Decoy & Sporting Collectibles Show in May this year. We look forward to welcoming all attendees at the new Westin Lombard venue.

Members Only Facebook Group Growing Every Day

If you are not among the nearly 200 members currently participating in the MDCA Facebook collecting group, you are missing out on an opportunity to share your collection, get help with ID and valuation, and even buy/sell/trade with other members in a secure and safe environment. Unlike some other online collector groups, there's the

assurance that you always know with whom you are dealing. To join the group, just set up your personal account at midwestdecoy.org (if you haven't already done so), and then click on the Facebook logo in the Members Only area. You'll be glad you did.



SPECIAL OFFER:
Join today and get a
FREE MDCA hat!



Make Sure We Have Your Correct Email Address

Email communications is the fastest and most efficient way to get important Club news to you. This includes two out of three of our information-packed newsletters as well as important show information. If you are not receiving newsletters or other club communications via email, it means that we don't have a good email address for you on file. If your listing in the Member Directory doesn't include a good email address for you, make sure you provide it to us so that you get all of the Club information you need. Just send your correct email address to Jeff Seregny at jseregny@gmail.com and we'll add it to your record in the Club database.



Not an MDCA Member?

JOIN NOW to Enjoy All of the Benefits of Membership

If you like these newsletters you can join the MDCA and receive many more benefits reserved for our members including:

- Having access to the largest decoy and sporting collectibles community in North America
- Our Member Directory in print form as well as an online searchable version
- Full subscription to our three times per year club newsletter including our email only versions
- Free entry to our annual show with seminars, displays, silent auctions, and networking events
- Access to the Members Only Facebook group where you can share decoy stories, get help with ID, and buy, sell and trade with other members in a secure environment
- All this for only \$25 a year (or \$70 for the more efficient three year option)!

Just complete the application below to join...and get a FREE MDCA hat!

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Primary Phone: _____ Secondary Phone: _____

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Collecting Interest(s): _____

* Free hat offer valid for first time members only.

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MIDWEST
Decoy Collectors
ASSOCIATION

Share Your Collecting Stories



We all agree that the "thrill of the hunt" for that next piece to add to our collection is a big part of the enjoyment that comes from collecting. The

stories behind those exciting finds are often treasures in themselves, and we'd love to be able to share those experiences with our members in future issues of the club newsletter. So please send us your best tales from your years of collecting. They can be about the ones you've added or about the ones that got away. They can be funny or just surprising. Please email your stories along with pictures (if available) to Jeff Seregny at jseregny@gmail.com, or you can mail them to Jeff at: 6699 Ferry Road, East Jordan, MI 49727.

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2020 Show Preview

The Westin Lombard, May 5-9, 2020



New Location: Positioned for Growth

After 35 years in St. Charles, the North American Vintage Decoy & Sporting Collectibles Show has found a new home. The Westin Lombard features larger sleeping/selling rooms, super, well-lit exhibit space and countless amenities. The hotel simply has everything we need.

Our members are excited about the new show venue. Change can be challenging. Particularly when one has been doing the same thing for so long. However, our members have really embraced our move to The Westin Lombard. We've experienced surge in room and table reservations coming much earlier than in past years. Positive comments about the new show location have poured in and support for the move has been strong. Naturally, there have been some questions about the show and how it will all work at the new location. To answer these, FAQ's (frequently asked questions) have been posted on the club website at midwestdecoy.org within the "Show Week" section in the "Annual Show" tab.

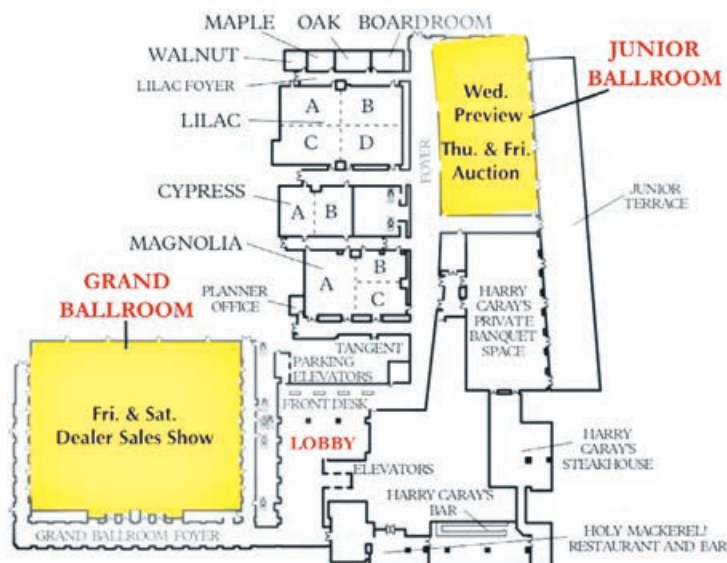
The Show: Bigger and Better than Ever

As the largest and longest running event of its kind, the 55th North American Vintage Decoy & Sporting Collectibles Show will once again offer something for everybody with room-too-room trading, a Guyette & Deeter auction, and a dealer sales event. For many this will be their once-a-year opportunity to rekindle old friendships and maybe even add a decoy, call or some other sporting collectible to their collections. The show is simply a "must attend" gathering for anyone interested in America's hunting and fishing past and the great folk art that grew from it.

On the following pages you'll find a preview of the many activities planned for this year's show including the displays and exhibits, as well as educational seminars that are so popular with show attendees. Check out the day-by-day calendar of events on the opposite page.

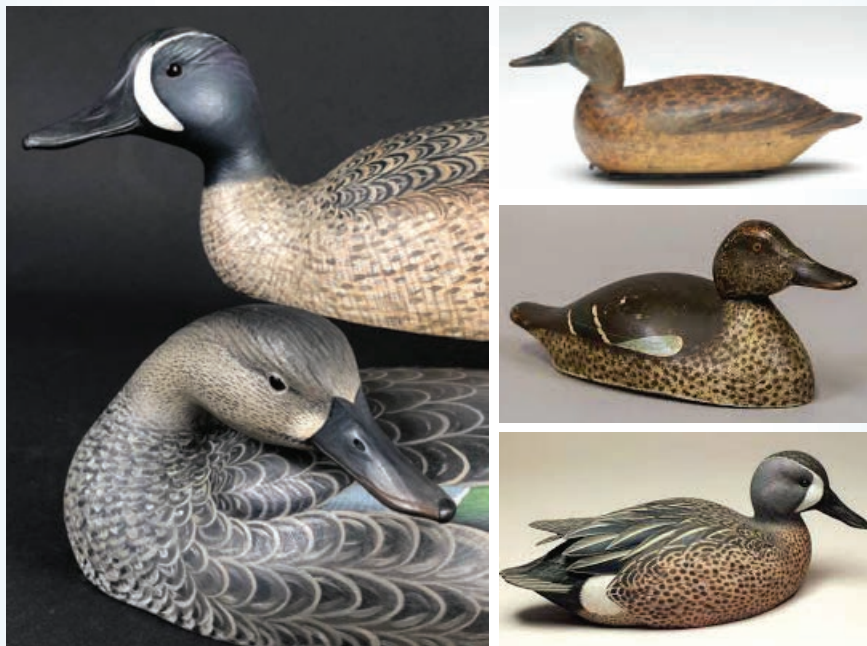
Some Key Events to Remember

- **Silent Auctions** will run continuously for both days in the Grand Ballroom, starting with the 12 noon opening of the Members Only "Early Bird" session on Friday. You missed a chance at some pretty special items last year if you didn't participate.
- **Free Appraisals** are offered in the lobby of the Grand Ballroom on both Friday and Saturday. Think "Antiques Roadshow." It's a great opportunity for folks to learn about and put a value on those items that have been sitting in the attic for far too long. We've seen some very special items come through the doors over the years.
- A **Members Only "Early Bird"** session in the Grand Ballroom on Friday will open at 12 noon prior to the public admission at 2 p.m. The Guyette & Deeter auction will start at 10 a.m. giving our members plenty of time to attend the sale. Set-up in the exhibit hall will be from 8 a.m. until 10 a.m.



The Westin offers convenient event space all located just steps from the main lobby.

Member Decoy Contest: Blue-Winged Teal Take the Stage



Each year we hold a species specific decoy contest for our members. This year's contest in the Grand Ballroom on Friday and Saturday will feature Blue-Winged Teal decoys. A new wrinkle for 2020 is that we will conduct two separate contests — one for vintage decoys and one for contemporary decoys. So members should start planning for which Blue-Winged Teal they will enter — one entry in both the vintage and contemporary categories is allowed. This should be a great competition and is sure to generate a lot of interest among all show attendees.

Make your plans now to attend now!

- Call The Westin Lombard at 888-627-9031 to make your room reservation.
- Reserve your selling tables for the Grand Ballroom dealer show using the "Table Reservation Form" in the back of this newsletter.



Show Schedule

Tuesday, May 5

All Day – Room-to-Room trading

6pm – Early Bird Poolside Reception

Wednesday, May 6

All Day – Room-to-Room trading

8:30am – Oscar Peterson Seminar

6pm – Auction Preview Reception

Thursday, May 7

All Day – Room-to-Room trading

8:30am – Elmer Crowell Seminar

9:30am-1pm – Show Registration

11am – Guyette & Deeter Auction Day 1

4pm – Evans Collectors Meeting

6pm – Call Makers Auction & Party

Friday, May 8

9am – Call Makers Meeting
& Contest Judging

10am – Guyette & Deeter Auction Day 2

12 noon-2pm – Members Only
"Early Bird" Show

2pm-7pm – Public Grand Ballroom
Sales Event

- Elmer Crowell Decoy Display
- Oscar Peterson Fish Decoy Display
- Lake Poygan Shooting Box Display
- Shell Box Display
- Special President's Display
- Featured Carver Exhibit – Jerry Cranwill
- Contemporary Waterfowl/ Fish Carver Demonstrations/Displays
- Continuous Silent Auctions
- Free Identification and Appraisals

Saturday, May 9

9am-2pm – Public Grand Ballroom Sales Event
Displays / Demonstrations /
Appraisals Continue

Elmer Crowell:

Setting the standard
for both working
and decorative decoys

The 2020 Member Display will feature the work of one of America's most talented and highly regarded makers – Elmer Crowell of East Harwich, Massachusetts. His work has long been lauded as among the finest ever produced and is coveted by collectors from coast to coast. Crowell is legendary for the artistry of his paint and sculptural form his pieces exude and is viewed by many as the most influential bird carver of all time.

This display will include decoys from some of the finest private collections in America, pieces that have not been viewed in public in many years. While most of us can only hope to own one of his decoys some day, this display offers the opportunity for everyone to enjoy and marvel at the immense talent that Crowell brought to his work. Visit this unique display on Friday and Saturday in the Grand Ballroom.



Seminar to Explore Crowell's Life and Work

On Thursday morning, Steve O'Brien, owner of Copley Fine Art Auctions, will discuss this groundbreaking artist and his impact on decoy making and folk art in general. As the co-author of a new book, "Elmer Crowell: Father of American Bird Carving," O'Brien will trace Crowell's life from his early fascination with ornithology and hunting to his career as a market gunner in the late 1800s. This, of course led to making decoys that would eventually land in the homes of the Fords, duPonts, Rockefellers, and other prominent families of the 20th century. This promises to be an immersive and educational windfall for all who attend.



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Oscar Peterson: Immense Talent on Display

Arguably the most prolific maker of fish decoys ever, Oscar Peterson's is among the best known and most widely imitated fish decoy carver. Oscar's fish were the first known pieces to exhibit the traits that have become known as the "Cadillac style." His brightly colored, sometimes abstractly shaped fish were truly the design of an ingenious, self-taught artist. The volume and range of his work is simply breathtaking. He is believed to have created more than 15,000 works of art that included not just fish decoys, but also duck decoys, plaques, and other decorative items. A gathering of Peterson's finest work will be on full display in the Grand Ballroom on Friday and Saturday.



Seminar to Add Insight into Peterson's Work

Prior to the Grand Ballroom display, Jon Deeter, collector and co-owner of Guyette and Deeter, will talk about the history and identifying characteristics of these rare and remarkable carvings on Wednesday morning. Come early as this is sure to be a popular event.

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Boxes, Boxes, Boxes

Gunning Box Display

This year the show will once again feature Lake Poygan gunning boxes as well as a selection of shot shell boxes. Roger Ludwig will once again assemble a group of classic Lake Poygan (WI) gunning boxes. These unique, multi-faceted, wooden “totes” were ingenious tools of the Wisconsin hunting trade that allowed early hunters to more easily transport and organize everything they needed for a successful hunt.

Shot Shell Box Display

Member Rudy Ronning will once again treat show attendees with a display of some wonderful examples of shot shell boxes from his personal collection. The marvelous, colorful graphics on these boxes is always a treat to see.

Be sure to check these boxes out in the Grand Ballroom on Friday and Saturday.



President's Display Returns

Introduced at last year's show, the President's Display features special items that merit recognition and exposure to a wide audience. It also provides the opportunity to honor specific individuals' significant contributions to our hobby. This year's display on Friday and Saturday in the Grand Ballroom does both.

The display will celebrate the multi-dimensional talent of Lou Schifferl of Neenah, Wisconsin. Lou is a highly regarded artist for his oils and watercolors, while at the same time being widely known for his wildfowl carvings. Lou has been generous with his time and talent throughout his career and has done a great deal to increase interest in old decoys and related items. He has donated his special talent to the MDCA by creating artwork for our show pins and directories since the club's inception in 1976. Be sure to stop by this display to enjoy his work and to honor Lou's many contributions. Thank you Lou!

Callmakers Meet at the Show



The Callmakers and Collectors Association of America (CCAA) will once again hold their annual meeting in St. Charles during our show. On Thursday, the group conducts a Fancy Call Contest followed by a Pizza Party and Custom Call Auction.

On Friday morning they hold their annual Membership and Business Meeting. On Friday afternoon and on Saturday the Fancy Call Contest entries and results are on display in the Grand Ballroom for all to enjoy. This is a great opportunity to see the fine work by these talented craftsmen.



Missouri Decoy Identification Available

In the face of widespread confusion and frequent misattribution, a group of dedicated collectors has been working hard to expand our collective understanding of the decoys produced by the several factories in Jefferson City, Missouri. From 2pm to 3 pm on Friday, May 8 the Jefferson City Decoy Study Group will be on hand to help attendees with identification of these fascinating decoys. If you need help with identification of one of these underappreciated birds, bring it to the show and learn from the experts.

Hunting & Fishing Collectibles Magazine *Our 20th Year!*

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Contemporary

JERRY CRANWILL: FEATURED CARVER EXHIBIT



CORNER



We are excited that Manito, Illinois decoy maker Jerry Cranwill has agreed to share his unique talent with us at the 2020 show. As a young boy, Cranwill helped his uncles collect their duck decoys after hunts and this experience was key in influencing his interest in creating his own. This exhibit will feature a broad range of Jerry's work including waterfowl and upland birds. Be sure to make some time to spend in the Grand Ballroom enjoying his wonderful work.

In addition, more than a dozen other decoy makers will showcase their talents in the Contemporary Corner. This will include carving and painting demonstrations where attendees can learn the "tricks of the trade" directly from these contemporary masters. These popular demonstrations represent a great learning opportunity for show attendees.



Dick LeMaster's Life and Work to be Celebrated

We have a special treat in the Contemporary Corner this year – an exhibit featuring the work of famed decoy maker and educator Dick LeMaster. Dick spent years not only discovering nuances of waterfowl carving, but also sharing his findings with others through his seminars and numerous books that enable beginning and experienced carvers to develop and hone their own set of skills. Come see the legacy he has left behind in the Grand Ballroom on Friday and Saturday. Dick's family will be on hand to share in the celebration of his huge role in the evolution of waterfowl carving.



MEMBER
PROFILE:

Tom Bosworth:

DISTANCE IS NO DETERRENT FOR THIS ALOHA STATE COLLECTOR



"Lumberyard"
Curlew, ca. 1900.

It might seem unlikely to find a serious decoy collector living so far from where these old blocks were actually made. While a native of Milwaukee, Tom Bosworth's anthropology degree took him all over the country from Hawaii to New York, only to finally settle back to Honolulu where he has lived with his wife, Valerie, since 2005. However, for Tom collecting has been a way of life for as long as he can remember.

Decoy Collecting in the Genes

Tom's parents, Marian and Bob Bosworth, started collecting decoys about 1963. They got interested after chartering Ted & Carmen Mulliken's yacht Hope for bone fishing in the Bahamas. Ted had retired after selling Wildfowler Decoys and bought the yacht and the couple served as part of the crew. On one of the trips the Mulliken's gave his parents a 1950s black bellied plover decoy in winter plumage which he had carved for hunting in the out islands.

Tom recalls that his first decoy was a present from Claire and Bud Menzel, who were decoy collectors in Oshkosh. Along with his parents he shot skeet with them one day, and they ended up giving him a truly wonderful bluebill by a fellow who he suspects is just as happy to be known as "anonymous."

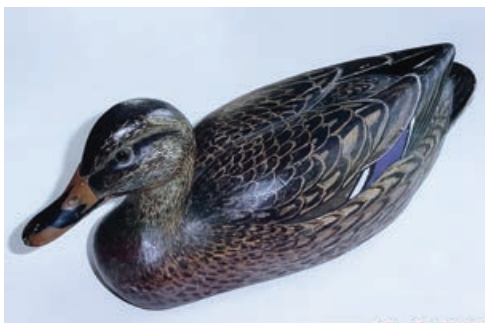


Tom's first decoy

Learning the Ropes

Given his parents' interest, Tom had access to the Decoy Collectors Guides, Bill Mackey's book, Adele Earnest's "Art of the Decoy," but not a lot else for a long time. Coupled with no budget, he says that he pretty much floundered for years.

However, even then he was able to acquire a few nice pieces. He had met the shy and reclusive Enoch Reindahl when he was about ten when his dad and a friend tracked him down. They hadn't gotten any decoys from him, but once Tom was old enough to drive he'd head out to Stoughton to visit and try to buy a decoy. Now and then they'd go



Warren Dettman Mallard Hen, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, ca. 1940.

down into Reindahl's basement and look at his decoys. They were stacked like cordwood on a low shelf to the left of his workbench — mallards, pintail, canvasback, Canada geese, and a couple of snow geese.

When Tom was about 19 and living in a one room efficiency apartment in Madison, he borrowed a station wagon to visit Mr. Reindahl. Tom mentioned that canvasback were his dad's favorite duck, and that he'd like to give him one of Mr. Reindahl's. He thought about that a bit, then told Tom to go down and pick one. Tom paid him fifty dollars, a big chunk of money for someone who couldn't afford a phone or a car. Still today this bird remains among Tom's favorites, and it's been languishing at the Museum of Wisconsin Art in West Bend since his move to Hawaii in 2005. He put several Wisconsin decoys with them on long term loan when he moved as he didn't want the salt air on the paint.

Tom says that learning about decoys really took off in the early



Maine Loon, ca. pre-1930



Rare Gus Moak Coot, Tustin, Wisconsin, ca. 1920.



Enoch Reindahl Canvasback Drake, Stoughton, Wisconsin, 1941.

1990s. He'd been volunteering in the Anthropology Department at the Milwaukee Public Museum for some time. The History Section had responsibility for the decoys, so he asked one of the curators to see them. Once in the storeroom he was amazed and a bit appalled. They were physically well taken



Delaware River Goose, ca. pre-Civil War



Albert Laing snuggle head Brant, Stratford, Connecticut, ca. 1835.



care of, but there was no organization at all. They had a great Nathan Cobb goose, the Dudley canvasback pictured in Bill Mackey's book, a great Ira Hudson yellowlegs, a lovely pair of Bert Graves jumbo mallards with paint by Catherine Elliston, a pair of pristine Perdew canvasback, and an Elliston canvasback in rough but original paint. Hundreds of decoys.

Tom offered to organize and research the collection, and they accepted. Over the next couple of years he got the collection into order, but it was quite a while before he had any success in research. Eventually, the curators by pure chance found a correspondence file with a treasure trove of letters between Grigsby Markham and Bill Schultz, and Bill Mackey, Joe French, Gene Konopasek, and several

other early collectors who had sold decoys to the museum.

It was about that time that he went up to the Oshkosh Decoy Show with a stack of photos of the museum's decoys. Joe Engers had a booth and Tom showed him the pictures. Joe was a bit taken aback by what he was looking at and asked if Tom would do an article for Decoy Magazine. Tom agreed, and it was published in the November-December 1993 issue.

That eventually led to talking the museum into mounting an exhibit of their decoys and writing the exhibit catalog. The two were incredible learning experiences, both about decoys and the way museums operate. It also led to meeting a lot of decoy collectors as Tom needed to get their advice and perspectives. Joe Engers, Frank Schmidt of Guyette & Schmidt, Herb Desch, Dick McIntyre, and Alan Haid all went through the collection at different times and provided a lot of information he couldn't have gotten anywhere else. Through it all, Tom soaked up a lot of information about individual decoys as well as different perspectives on collecting.

Rebooting the Collection

By his own admission, Tom's early decoy collecting was pretty scattershot. It wasn't until well into his work with the museum collection that he finally

decided that, since he looked at decoys as art, he ought to be treating them like that. He knew he didn't have the shelf space, the budget, or the ambition to have a big collection, and realized he would enjoy the collection more if he defined the masters he wanted, the species he wanted, and set about getting one really good example of each. He also decided on a fairly arbitrary limit of 25 decoys. It proved to be hugely beneficial "because it disciplined his buying and improved the quality of what he eventually bought.

With those ideas in mind he took every decoy off the shelves and asked himself: "If I could have only one, which would it be? Not the most expensive or rarest, but which was my favorite? Then he asked: "If I could have one more, which would it be?"

He then looked at his collection, which was around sixty-five decoys



Frank Resop Canvasback Drake, Berlin, Wisconsin, ca. 1920s.



Robert Elliston Bluebill Repainted as a Mallard Drake by Catherine Elliston, Peoria, Illinois, ca. 1920s.

at the time. Several were hand-me-downs from his parents, plus decoys he had added. He realized that he had only a few decoys by people he would call masters, like Harry Shourds, Enoch Reindahl, and Warren Dettmann and some others that were made by skilled students of the masters in their areas.

Over the next several years Tom sold off 50 or more and put the money into about a dozen. That let him buy far better decoys and provided a lot more shelf space for each one. Overall, the exercise was a big success. Fewer decoys, better examples, more shelf space for each. And the new emphasis greatly increased his enjoyment of the collection.

For a while he concentrated on Wisconsin decoys, because they were local, but he got to the point that the remaining makers he wanted were so rare and so expensive that he'd be unlikely to plug those holes. He started looking further afield. Over time he was able to add a marvelous Albert Laing snuggle head brant, which is the earliest decoy he owns. At the most recent G&D sale, Tom acquired a rare Black Necked Stilt formerly in the Mackey collection. Very few are known to exist.

Early on Tom was particularly smitten by a Delaware River/Cape May Canada goose. He'd never seen another example, the neck was broken with a chunk missing, and it was in pretty "Plain Jane" black and white repaint. When he got to the auction preview he could hardly believe how much he liked it. He asked a couple friends with more experience

with East Coast decoys to look it over, and they made encouraging sounds. No one had ever seen another. It was in rough condition, but clearly very rare and very early, maybe even pre-Civil War.

Given its condition, he asked himself, "Do I want it? He likes to ask, 'If you collected human figural sculpture, and had the chance to buy the Venus di Milo, would you turn up your nose because the arms have been ripped off, all the paint is worn off, and the remaining surface is all dinged up?'"

Tom recalls, "That scamp Dick McIntyre was the only person who bid past the very reasonable high estimate. He recognized it as something special. I went to three and a half times high estimate before Dick finally relented. I was practically hopping up and down with pleasure at getting it. I got it with what would have been my very last bid."

Tom's collection still features several Wisconsin decoys including a coot by Gus Moak, one of three known, a folky can drake by Frank Resop and three rigmate Moak Cans. Also in the mix are a Robert Elliston Bluebill repainted as Mallard Drake by Catherine Elliston from the Joe French collection; an early "Lumberyard" Curlew; a Holly family Canvasback with a copper wire bill repair; and a wonderful pre-1930 Loon from Maine.

Some Hits and Some Misses...but Always Fun

Tom has enjoyed a number of experiences along the way, some more "fun" than others. He recalls missing a really good opportunity several years ago at a local auction house. He went to the preview the day before the sale, and found a pair of really good Dodge Green Winged Teal in a lot of wooden boxes. He had a friend coming over the next day for a cookout, so he admits, he did a truly dumb thing. He left a bid based on what he thought it would take to buy the lot



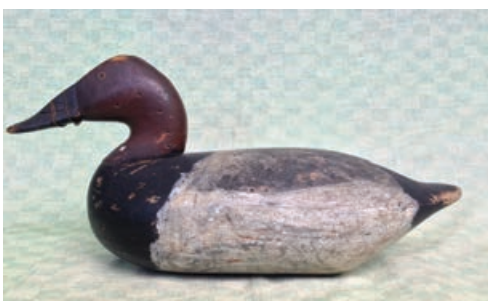
Ted Mulliken Wildfowler Black Bellied Plover in Winter Plumage, ca. 1955.



Herters Owl, Waseca, Minnesota, ca. 1935

rather than what he was willing to pay, which was considerably higher. He confidently expected a call from the auction house telling him to come pick up his prize. It didn't happen. He likes to think he learned a lesson there.

Another more rewarding experience occurred when Tom was working on the museum's collection. In his own words, "A fellow collector gave me a copy of Warren Dettmann's obituary, which had both his son's name and town. I called the son and went to visit. He had albums of his father's photographs, including some of his decoys. He told me that



Holly family Canvasback, ca. 1890-1910.

Gus Moak Canvasbacks, Tustin, Wisconsin, ca. early 1920s.



his sister had died, but her husband was still alive. He put me in touch, and I drove down to interview him. It turned out that he had a lovely mallard hen decoy, probably made around 1940, and was willing to sell it. Bingo. It had been sitting in a bedroom fifteen miles from the National Decoy Show for decades. Everyone interested had the obituary with his name and town, but I was the first one to call. Sometimes you get lucky."

Contributions Run Deep

Tom has always had an insatiable curiosity when it comes to decoys as well as a willingness to share what he has learned along the way. He wrote the catalog for the Milwaukee Public Museum's decoy exhibit, entitled 'Whistling Wings, Whittled Ducks, and Wetlands'. He has also written several articles about Wisconsin decoy makers for *Decoy Magazine* including Walter Pelzer, Warren Dettmann,

Ned Hollister (the only identified Wisconsin maker of shorebirds), and James Walton. He credits writing them with forcing him to contact the few surviving decoy makers or their families and learning a lot along the way. He was also on the MDCA board for several years. We collectors should thank Tom for his dedication to preserving the knowledge of so many decoys and their makers and adding to our collective enjoyment of this great hobby. You can reach Tom at wudndux@aol.com



Walter Peltzer Mallard Drake, ca. 1940.

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2020 Spring Decoy Auction



Left to right: Joe French, Jim McCleery, Lloyd Griffith, and Bud Ward at the April 1993 Guyette & Schmidt auction.

The Collection of Dr. Lloyd Griffith

We are pleased to announce that we have been selected to represent the collection of legendary decoy collector, Dr. Lloyd Griffith. The Griffith collection will be sold in our Spring and Summer 2020 sales. Other collections include Dick & Diane Walters, Richard Perkins, Phil Mott, and David & Lynn Meyer. Contact Gary Guyette at 410-745-0485 or Jon Deeter at 440-610-1768 to discuss consignments.



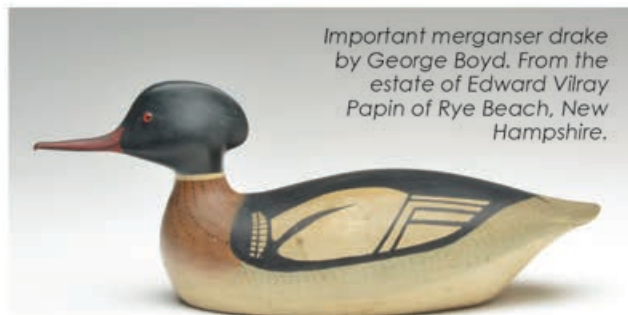
Outstanding swimming Canada goose by Nathan Cobb, Jr. Griffith collection. Formerly in the Mackey collection.



Incredibly executed working mallard duck in tucked head resting pose by Ferdinand Homme.



Part of an excellent selection of fish decoys by Oscar Peterson from the collection of Dick and Diane Walters.



Important merganser duck by George Boyd. From the estate of Edward Vilray Papin of Rye Beach, New Hampshire.



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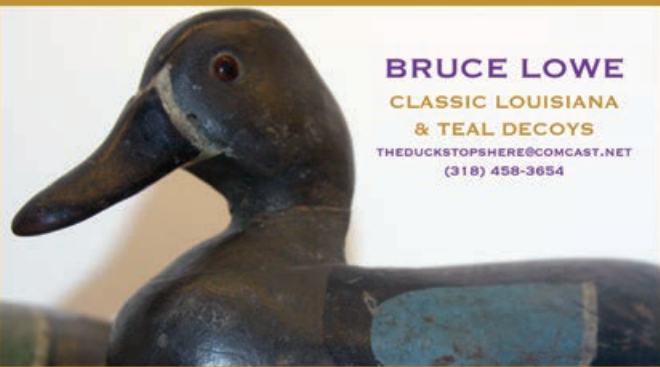
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Reserve Your Tables for the May 8-9, 2020 Grand Ballroom Dealer Show now using the Table Registration Form on the next page! >>>>>

As in the past, priority will be given to returning exhibitors who have held tables in prior years **provided your reservation and payment is received by March 15th.** **The table cost remains the same as last year:**

- \$75 per table for reservations and payment by March 15, 2020
- \$100 per table for reservation and payment after March 15, 2020

Early Grand Ballroom Set-Up Time!

Set-up time in the Grand Ballroom of The Westin will be on Friday morning from 8 a.m. until 10 a.m. The doors will be open at 12 noon for a Members Only "Early Bird" session before the public comes in at 2 p.m. Only table exhibitors will be allowed in the Grand Ballroom during the set-up hours.

A name badge will be provided for all exhibitors, available at the Show Registration Desk beginning on Thursday morning. Please wear this badge in the Grand Ballroom at all times.

Send in Your Table Reservation Form Now!

To reserve your tables, please fill out the Table Reservation Form on the next page and return it, along with your check no later than March 15, 2020 (Note that tables are 6' X 30.) Make sure to indicate at the bottom of the form if you would like your table(s) to be located next to another specific dealer. We will do everything we can to accommodate these requests. Your canceled check is your confirmation.

You can contact Matt Bryant at (785)-201-2923 or matt.bryant@wilsonco.com if you have questions.



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2020 BALLROOM EVENT EXHIBITOR TABLE REGISTRATION FORM

Primary table holder:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone #: _____

_____ Dues are paid up through 2020 (Y/N)

Person sharing table:

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Dues are paid up through 2020 (Y/N)

PLEASE NOTE: All exhibitors must be MDCA members in good standing. If not already paid for 2020, you can pay your dues online at midwestdecoy.org or by including your dues along with your table payment. **If someone is sharing your table**, they must either be a family member, or be a MDCA member in good standing. They can join online at midwestdecoy.org or by including their dues payment and member profile information along with this form.

Checks should be made payable to the MDCA.

	Amount
_____ # of Table(s) @ \$75 each (\$100 each if after March 15)	\$ _____
_____ Dues @ \$25 for one year or \$70 for 3 years	\$ _____
TOTAL PAYMENT INCLUDED	\$ _____

****Note :** Tables are 6' X 30" with white table cloths.

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